इसलिए जब 2004-05 में पहली बार पॉलिसी लागू की गई, तो उसमें कुछ कमियां आ सकती हैं-पहली बार में जितनी डिग्री या कंसिस्टेंसी उसमें होनी चाहिए थी, वह शायद न हो पाई हो, लेकिन पहली बार में कमी पर ही आप उनके लाइसैंस निरस्त कर दें, यह ठीक नहीं है, मेरे विचार में इस पर पुनर्विचार होना चाहिए। यदि उसमें थौड़ी पानी की मात्रा है, तो आप स्वाभाविक रूप से उतनी परसैंटेज के हिसाब से उसकी कास्ट कम कर सकते हैं और उनको इसके आधार पर एक चेतावनी देकर एक मौका और दिया जाना चाहिए। पहली बार आपने एक पॉलिसी एडाप्ट की और पहली बार कमी होने पर ही आप उनके लाइसेंस निरस्त कर रहे हैं, यह ठीक नहीं हैं, क्योंकि वे छोटे कल्टिवेटर हैं, उस जमीन पर दूसरी कोई खेती संभव नहीं है। इसलिए इस पर एक बार पुनर्विचार जरूर किया जाना चाहिए। मेरा निवेदन है कि क्या माननीय मंत्री जी पहली बार लागू की गई इस पॉलिसी को देखते हुए, क्या इस पर पुनर्विचार करेंगे?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, in fact, debarring was introduced in the policy in the year 2004-05. We received representations. On the basis of representations, I believe, including by the hon. Member, I reviewed the policy last year, and we all agreed that we will not implement the debarring policy last year, but we will include it as a forewarning for the next year. So, clause 6(iii) was introduced in 2004-05 forwarning farmers that in 2005-06 you would be debarred if you gave opium of less than 55per cent. So, 3,667 farmers, out of a little over 80,000 farmers, who gave us opium last year of a consistency less than 55 per cent. have been debarred this year. So, it is not correct to say there was no forewarning; in fact, it is after forewarning, wide publicity, and discussions with all stakeholders.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question. Question No. 384.

Check on influx of Afghani heroin

*384. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent seizures on naroctics, especially heroin by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence personnel in Delhi indicate that the contraband originating from Afghanistan is conduited to world markets via Delhi;

(b) whether the majority of offenders nabbed by the DRI are from Ghana, Nigeria and other African nations; and

(c) what steps are being taken to check the influx of Afghani heroin into the country for onward carriage?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) A Statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir. Investigations conducted by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in the course of recent seizures of Heroin of Afghan origin in Delhi indicate that the Heroin was intended for consumption in the world market.

(b) Yes, Sir. The majority of the offenders nabbed by DRI in connection with the recent seizures of Heroin of Afghan origin were from African nations. Seven Nigerians and one Malawi national have been arrested.

(c) All Customs fields formations and DRI are on alert to check the influx of Afghani heroin into the country. All the flights coming from Afghanistan are, considered sensitive flights and preventive checks/ intelligence have been stepped up including keeping close watch on transit passengers coming from Afghanistan. Sniffer dogs are also pressed into service for detection of narcotics. Besides this, thorough examination of parcels is also conducted manually as well as through X-ray for the consignments orginating from Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as those that are destined for Ghana, Nigeria and other African nations.

SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Sir, regarding the drug smuggling activities in Delhi, I am very happy that our hon. Minister has given me a very, very detailed answer. But, Sir, I just was to know about the punishments. The punishment that is given is very severe in the Gulf countries, but it is very simple in India. That is my point. Unless the punishment is a little severe, I do not think there would be any effect on the people.

Secondly, Sir, I would like to know whether some African countries were found to be involved in misusing diplomatic immunity by bringing in contraband goods through diplomatic channels.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, this has been a matter of debate in this country, whether the punishment under the NDPS Act is too severe or not severe enough. Parliament amended the law and has prescribed punishments after classifying possession of contraband items into small quantity, more than small but less than commercial, and commercial.

Now, I have a list of punishments for various offences. For example, for cultivation of opium, cannabis or coca, the punishment is up to ten years. For production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transport of drugs, even a small quantity, it is rigorous imprisonment up to six months plus fine. For more than small but less than commercial category, the punishment is rigorous imprisonment up to ten years. We can discuss, Sir, whether the punishments are not severe or severe. But, this is what Parliament has made now. And if there is a full-scale discussion on the Act, I suppose, we can take to views of all the Members whether the punishments should be more severe or not. But, speaking for myself, I do not share the view that possessing small quantities of drugs should be visited with death penalty. That I do not agreewith.

श्रीमती बिम्बा रायकर: महोदय, दस वर्ष की सजा या छः महीने की सज़ा में कुछ फर्क नहीं होता है ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: वह तो रहने वाले को ही पता है कि फर्क होता है या नहीं होता है।

श्रीमती बिम्बा रायकर: आजकल प्रिजन में रहने वाले लोग हम लोगों से ज्यादा अच्छी तरह से है। जेल में फेसिलिटीज बहुत हैं, इसलिए जेल में रहना कोई मुश्किल की बात नहीं है।

Sir, I just want to know through you, whether our DRI officials are fully equipped with arms, sophisticated communication facilities, and physical attributes to defend the smugglers.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, the DRI has made significant seizures of narcotic drugs year after year. As far as equipment is concerned, I am told, they have adequate equipment. I also think they carry arms where they are authorized to do so. I have not come across any case where it has been necessary to use arms, But I am sure, some of them carry arms.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, the hon. Minister has explained in his reply the various measures taken in terms of preventive checks and Intelligence operations being undertaken. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether all these measures envisaged are only on paper, or whether they are operational at the ground level also. If they are operational at the ground level, I would like to know whether they are adequate.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, in the matter of smuggling drugs and deterrent action against drug peddlers, one can never say that action is adequate. I go by figures of seizure. I find that there is considerable seizure of heroin, *ganja,* opium, *charas* and other narcotics, but I am absolutely sure that there is perhaps more smuggling than what is reflected in the figures of seizures.

The DRI does its best, based on Intelligence. Then legal action is taken under the NDPS Act. Legal proceedings take many years in this country. Many people are acquitted. The candid answer to the hon. Member's question is, I cannot say honestly that the action is adequate, but I think the DRI is doing its best. However, I am willing to heed suggestions for improving the DRI's action.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Mr. Chairman Sir, the Minister, in his reply, has given an assurance that the DRI is taking firm action to check drug peddling in the country. But, Sir, in recent years, more drugs are coming into India, not only from Afghanistan, but also from across the border in the North East.

It is a well-known fact that India is sandwiched between two major drug-producing zones, the *Golden Triangle* and the *Golden Cresent.* The matter of concern is that the funds, which are generated through narcotic smuggling, are being used, not only by criminals, but also by terrorists for insurgency. This is one area of concern.

Secondly, India is no more a drug transiting country, that it is meant only for the global market, but increasingly, it is becoming a consuming country. there are so many instances in Delhi where youngsters and others, I would say, high-society people, are indulging in drug consumption. Now, does the DRI have enough infrastructure to meet the challenges of surveillance, Intelligence gathering and apprehension?

A second related question would be this. As the hon. Minister himself has said, legal procedures take a lot of time. Did the Government consider setting up fast track courts so that the disposal of cases pertaining to drug smuggling is quick?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, it is not only the DRI, but also the Narcotics Control Bureau that is under the Home Ministry, which is

mandated to deal with drug peddling, drug trafficking and consumption of drugs.

The hon. Member is right; there is growing use of drugs among the people of this country. Lifestyles are changing; attitudes are changing. And, among the young people, it is a matter of great concern that there is an increase in the use of drugs.

Besides the DRI and the Narcotic control Bureau, there is the State Police, which takes action against drug traffickers and drug peddlers. At the border, the Border Security Forces are also authorized to take action against drug peddlers.

We have no specific information about the link between narcotics and terrorism. But I have read and heard the phrase 'narco terrorism'. So, obviously, there are some terrorist outfits which also finance themselves by peddling drugs. We have established special courts under the NDPS Act for trying drug offences. But, as I said, my answer to the hon. Member is the same as my answer to my learned friend earlier. One can never say that the matter is satisfactory or that we have adequate machinery to deal with the growing menace of drugs. That, I am willing to admit. We must improve our machinery and our enforcement against the growing menace of drugs.

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA: Sir, as Shri Anand Sharma has said, it is not only from Afghanistan but from the North-East also that these narcotics and psychotropic drugs are being smuggled. It is known as Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent. The main thing is that, earlier India was a transit point, now it has become end users also. I will ask the hon. Minister, have all the precautions been taken about it? In case of schools and colleges, in many foreign countries, they have put 'No Drug Zone' signs and areas and if anybody is found handling drugs near the schools and colleges severe punishment is given to them because they are spoiling our young generation and nation. So, what action is the Government taking about it?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I agree with the hon. Member. If anyone is peddling drugs near schools and colleges, the most severe action should be taken against them. If they would be dealing with commercial quantities, as I said in my answer to the principal question, the punishment for

possessing drugs in commercial quantities is quite severe. It is rigorous imprisonment of ten years and huge fines. Enforcement is a matter that is now in the hands of several agencies essentially State agencies and I admit that enforcement is perhaps not as strict as it should be. But all I can say is, yes we must improve the machinery as well as its enformcement and visit drug peddlers, especially those who peddle drugs to our children, with the severest penalty. But our courts must also respond to the mood of Parliament, to the mood of law makers. The special courts and the High Court must also recognise that the drug peddling and drug trafficking is a grave menace to the society, and if they find the person guilty, they must visit them with the severest penalty. I would support severe penalty when a person is found guilty.

Acquisition of new planes for Air India and Indian Airlines

*385. SHRI SHARAD YADAV:†
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have finally decided to buy new planes for Air India/Indian Airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of companies which have been short listed for acquisition of planes for both the airlines;

(c) by when the orders would be placed with the manufacturing companies and planes delivered to the airlines; and

(d) what is the total amount of expenditure involved in these deals and the present status of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Regarding acquisition of new plans for Air India and Indian Airlines

(a) to (d) In so far as Indian Airlines is concerned, Cabinet Committee

† The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sharad Yadav.